

Evaluating and Designing Some Components of Fourth Grade English Textbooks of BRAC Primary Schools

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For my mother, for believing in me

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Introduction:

1.1 Introduction

The internship report that I am writing is required for the completion of my Bachelors' degree from the Department of English and Humanities. The appropriateness of materials to the teaching situation and the curriculum; the content of the materials and the teaching-learning activities the material should promote and new directions for materials design are some of the crucial matters that effect language learning specially for second language learners. This paper is a reflection of my four month internship for BRAC, a non-profit organization where I designed curriculums for fourth grade English class for the rural areas of Bangladesh. The materials that I designed were prepared to be used to teach English as a second language in BRAC primary schools.

1.2 Purpose of the Study

The central concern of my paper is the appropriateness of the materials to the methodology. The evaluation, adaptation, and innovation of language teaching materials must be based on methodological criteria. Methodology incorporates two sets of related criteria: criteria for the selection and organization of content and that which determines the type and range of the teaching-learning activities. Content should be information and data that are cognitively and affectively significant to the learner and that stimulates negotiation in an interpersonal context. Content should be sequenced so as to maintain continuity throughout the materials. Activities rather than models and differentiation rather than predictability underlie the summary of decisions to be made in designing an

activity

1.3 Procedure of the Study

While doing an internship for BRAC and evaluating existing and designing materials, I first had to learn about how the classes were taught and to which extent students and teachers were able to grasp as learning differs with urban and rural standard students. The first step was for me to go and visit a rural area primary school to get an idea of what the short comings were in the present text book that is provided by the government. Having seen all the aspects that needed work I went into BRAC with a clear perception and started evaluating and designing materials that emphasized on Communicative language Teaching (CLT) and Total Physical Response (TPR). By combining these two methods it was assumed that students would be able to use the language more than they were able to. The materials were thought to be interactive and used real life situations which students could relate to therefore, hoping students could apply all that is learned in the text book and class and can use in real life context.

1.4 Limitation of the Study

The limitations that were faced were time constraint, lack of sufficient school visits, and not being able to understand the capabilities of the students and teachers properly.

2. Literature review

Abstract: A literature-based review concerning why and how to evaluate language-teaching materials is presented with the purpose to facilitate English Language Teachers' awareness of material evaluation and assist their transference. The primary focus of a curriculum is on what is to be taught and when, leaving to the decision of the teaching profession as to how this should be done. In practice, however, there is no clear distinction between curriculum content and methodology - how a topic is taught often determines what is taught.

2.1. Introduction

As a key area in English Language Teaching (ELT), the significance of material design and evaluation has grown steadily. Evaluation is basically a matching process, which concerns matching learners' needs to available solutions (Hutchinson & Waters, 1987, p. 97). Low (1987, p. 21) reminds us that "teachers generally need to screen materials, in order to predict their suitability for particular classes". Thus, we should use material evaluation to question and develop our own ideas as to what is required. Another benefit is through identifying strengths and weaknesses in textbooks, optimum use can be made of strong points, and weaker points can be adapted or substituted from other books (Cunningsworth, 1995, p. 14).

2.2 Purposes of Material Evaluation

According to Swales (1985, cited in Low, 1987, p. 21), there are very few published

works about the effectiveness of course books in use. Teachers, material designers and education researchers tend to be less reflective about what is happening when one textbook is used. This primarily attributes to a centrally prescribed curriculum and course books. Another reason seems to be different progress achievement tests and final achievement tests. So teachers have little time or motivation to judge the fitness of the textbooks.

Actually, materials, especially authentic materials, play a significant role in second language teaching. They are not simply the everyday tools of the language teachers; they are an embodiment of the aims and methods of the particular teaching/learning situation. In the words of Cunningsworth (1995, p. 7), course book is “a resource in achieving aims and objectives that have already been set in terms of learner needs”. Through evaluation, we can assess whether the course book is the most appropriate for the target learners at various levels and in various teaching settings. What is more, the evaluation process will involve elements of comparison, especially where existing materials are being challenged by newly produced materials.

2.3. Types of Material Evaluation

In terms of when to evaluate a course book, Cunningsworth (1995, p. 14) points out that pre-use evaluation, in-use evaluation and post-use evaluation are engendered. The first type, pre-use evaluation tends to be the most difficult kind since there is no actual experience of using the course book. In-use evaluation, from another perspective, is a kind of evaluation for suitability, involving “matching the course book against a specific

requirement including the learners' objectives, the learners' background, the resources available, etc" (Cunningsworth, 1995, p. 14). On the other hand, post-use evaluation refers to an assessment of a textbook's fitness over a period of continual use. Evaluation of this kind can be practical in helping to decide whether to use the same textbook on future occasions. In addition, Cunningsworth (1995, p. 1) differentiates two approaches between impressionistic overview and in-depth evaluation. Since the former can only afford us a general introduction to the material, but not enough detail to ensure a good match between the content of the textbooks and the requirements of teaching/learning situation, an in-depth evaluation is necessitated as we can examine how specific items and different aspects of language are dealt with.

2.4 Approaches to Material Evaluation:

Some of the major value systems or ideologies which underline approaches to curriculum as well as the curriculum models associated with ideologies serve to show where some ideas such as behavioral objectives and proposals for process syllabuses have come from, while also providing some perspective on the place of such ideas within the field of curriculum studies and, thus and their status with ELT. (Ronald V. White p.g 24)

Different models of curriculum represent the expression of different values and expression of different value systems and consequently of quite divergent views on education. (Ronald V. White p.g 24)

Conversation classes differ widely. The teachers' primary goals may be on problem

solving. Students work in communication games and tasks in pairs or small groups with relatively little direct teacher input. Another class room teaching may be emphasized on grammar, pronunciation, and structured oral tasks.- (Jack C. Richards. p 67)

Conversation serves a variety of purposes, those in which the primary focus is on the exchange of information (the transactional function of conversation) (Brown and Yule 1983). In transactional uses of conversation the focus primarily on the social needs of the participants. Approaches to the teaching of both conversation and listening comprehension are fundamentally affected by whether the primary purposes involved are transactional or interactional.- (Jack C. Richards pg 68)

Approaches to instructional activities are needed for a process focused approach to the teaching of writing. Activities currently used reflect a focus on the different stages in the writing process. (Jack C. Richards pg 112)

Current approaches to the teaching of writing in a second or foreign language appear to be more effective than earlier product focused approaches because they allow the learner to explore and develop a personal approach to writing. Jack C. Richards pg 114)

2.5. Criteria for Evaluation

It is beneficial to consider some guidelines for evaluation. As illustrated by Cunningsworth (1995, pp. 7-15), course books should: correspond to learners' needs; help to equip learners to use language effectively for their own purposes; facilitate

students' learning process; have a clear role in mediating the target language and the learner. With reference to the evaluation criteria, **Ur** (1991) provides us 19 items in assessing a course book in general, for example: clear instruction and fluency practices in all four skills. It is decided by the assessor on what rating of each item in line with its importance. However, **Cunningsworth's** (1995, see Appendix) criteria are more detailed and specific for evaluating the effectiveness in different sub-skills and communicative interaction.

Moreover, as complementary criteria for evaluation, **Nunan's** (1989) lists of successful listening, speaking, reading and writing skills can also be applied. .

Successful listening skills include:

-skills in segmenting the stream of speech into meaningful words and phrases—relating the incoming message to one's own background knowledge

-identifying the rhetorical and functional intent of an utterance or parts of an aural text

-interpreting rhythm, stress and intonation to identify information focus and emotional/attitudinal tone

-extracting gist/essential information from longer aural texts without necessarily understanding every word.

(Excerpted from Nunan, 1989, p. 26)

2.6. Evaluation Procedures

In terms of the evaluation procedures, three major steps are proposed. First, select a unit from one volume of the textbooks; secondly, decide and define the criteria for your evaluation; thirdly, analyze and evaluate the effectiveness of the textbooks in matching their claims with learners' needs (adapted from Rea-Dickens & Germaine, 1992).

As mentioned earlier, evaluation is a straightforward, analytical matching process. In that case, analysis of our course materials in terms of subjective needs (material requirements) and analysis of objective solution (materials) are both required to find out how far the material matches the needs (Hutchinson & Waters, 1987, p. 97). Thus, four major steps can be taken in the evaluation process, as opposed to the former division:

(1) Defining criteria—On what bases will you judge materials?

(2) Subjective analysis—What realizations of the criteria do you want in your course (e.g. who are your learners; what language points should be covered)?

(3) Objective analysis—How does the material being evaluated realize the criteria (e.g. who is the material intended for; how is the content organized within the units)?

(4) Matching—How far does the material match your needs (Hutchinson & Waters, 1987, p. 97)

There are two main points that is helpful to bear in mind when thinking about text design for younger readers. These are:

1. Working memory capacity (i.e. information held and used in ongoing tasks) is sharper
2. The more difficult the task and the younger the person, the more disproportionately difficult that task becomes. Thus, for example, children might recall text relatively well but find summarizing it disproportionately difficult compared to adults (Byrd, 1985).

In Course and material design *Jane Willis & Sue* says that Beliefs about the language learning process commonly affect language policy and course design. For example, the belief that children can learn a foreign language better the younger they are has led governments to lower the age for beginning a foreign language down to primary level - hence the growing trend for the introduction of Primary English, with its subsequent 'knock-on' effects on syllabuses right through the schools. It is not on our agenda at this point to discuss the pros and cons of this, though I must add that according to some recent research, this is considered to be a possibly mistaken belief - it all depends on what you mean by 'better' and on the conditions in which the young learners are taught.

Between Course or Syllabus Design and Methodology, a task it is probably necessary to undertake at the level of broad outline and futile and frustrating if the attempt is made to delve into minutiae. Roughly, *one would want to say that CSD is concerned with the content of what gets taught and the organization of this (into bits of grammar, or functions, or what have you), while Methodology is concerned with the how. This, however, is a question it is best not to consider too closely. It is disingenuous in the extreme to suppose that the "what" of teaching is put together without reference to the*

“how”; contemporary syllabuses are almost always designed with a particular - generally broadly communicative - methodology in mind. And scholars have muddied the waters still further by misappropriating the word “communicative”, which ought to be a matter of methodology but is commonly used to refer to syllabus design.

2.7. Conclusion

To sum up, material evaluation and designing can provide teachers a good source of techniques, tell us what to do as well as what to avoid and consequently help us make optimum use of the existing materials. For this reason, language teachers should judge the fitness of the course books timely. Based on the evaluation results, we can either replace the textbook in use to adopt the most suitable one or to adapt the existing materials. By further adapting course books in use, we can save a lot of expense and efforts. It is also worth noting that the evaluation process is particularly helpful for teachers to gain good and useful insights into the nature of the material. Only in this way, can we respond to learners’ needs at the utmost and maximize the learning/teaching objectives.

3. Implementation of the Theories into practice;

As an Intern I worked for BRAC Education Program for four months to gain practical knowledge about material evaluation and material designing or renovation. It was a learning process and I observed some schools run by Brac Education Program. The objective behind the internship was to attempt to implement some of the theories that we had learnt in our courses such as ELT techniques and Teaching Practicum and Material Design and Evaluation.

3.1 Evaluation of Existing Materials in BRAC

The government text book that is used by BRAC Education Program (BEP) has been analyzed by consultants and said to be a book that consists of materials that are too complicated. There are several other factors that BEP faces when attempting to use this text book for their fourth grade English class. The factors are that the chapters in the text book are placed very abruptly, as well as the usage of grammar and terms are far too complicated for students of the level in which BEP focuses on. There are several methods that BEP is now trying to follow which they are trying to implement in the text book hence, the reason why BEP created a supplementary material to enhance the learning of the students. So my job was to actually go to the field and evaluate which parts of the text books are not working and try to evaluate and design things that will be useful for rural students to capture structure, vocabulary and simple grammar elements that were related to language learning. The materials that would be newly designed will be part of the supplementary material.

As a supplementary material for the class textbook for the class the materials that are designed will act as a substitute to reinforce what is already being taught in class along with activities and tasks which will better enable the interaction between teacher and students and enhance the learning process.

The materials consist of approaches and methods that very different from how the text book approached it; it is presumed that this material will bring different varieties of learning outcomes than that of the text book.

The difference between the text book and the materials are ample. Stories and poems in the text books are limited whereas in the supplementary material stories, games, rhymes, and poems in most lessons are there to help promote and facilitate reading and listening activities. Other exercises that are present in the text book are also implemented in the supplementary material and those are sentence formation, exercises with illustrations , fill in the blanks, time recognition, and number recognition; connect the dots, translation exercises, and grammar.

The use of Communicative Language Teaching (CLT), Total Physical Response (TPR)

were implemented while designing the materials as BRAC wanted more of a teacher-students based teaching and felt that students from rural areas will benefit more if CLT was used in the classroom while teaching, The use of TPR facilitated CLT in the exercises to help students actually pick up phrases and words that were uncommon to them. If compared to the text book the supplementary material consists of more interaction based lessons where students are encouraged to contribute their opinions and discuss topics that they can relate to in real life context.

The stories that are written for the supplementary materials attempt to allow rural area students to relate to their life so they can fit the stories into context with their own lives.

The implementation of the lessons of **Time Telling and Daily Routine** are also lessons that allow students to connect with the lesson in the text book but with a more interactive approach where games and rhymes are situated through the lesson for a better understanding of how to tell time and to learn the concept of daily routine.

Grammar, sentence structure and punctuation were implemented throughout the materials. Though there is a chapter dedicated to just punctuation, all three elements were indirectly placed throughout the materials so students can keep practicing the use of correct grammar, sentence structure and punctuation. In the initial chapters for teaching grammar, simple definitions were given with examples and lessons that would help them practice the grammar usage. For sentence structure, examples were implemented as well as scrambled sentences that students were asked to descramble to format the sentence correctly. In addition, poems and stories which were implemented asked students to

complete the unfinished poems and stories which would ultimately teach students proper sentence structure, grammar, and punctuation.

The implementation of games and case studies were designed and implemented in the supplementary materials to help students with speech and listening. Additionally, these particular games and case studies would enable students to use their own ideas and also to enable them to think on how to solve common problems that exist in everyday lives.

The supplementary material consists of nine chapters from the text book and each of the chapters focuses on grammar, punctuation, sentence structure, reading skills and listening skills.

There were two major agendas while I was working in BRAC- one was to evaluate the existing materials and see how it worked and secondly to design some of the sections that needed a bit of renovation.

1. Evaluating and completing the teacher's guide

There are three chapters designated for punctuation and out of which we have omitted one chapter which is unnecessary since it is too complex for our target students.

The punctuations that we are focusing on are full stop, question mark, comma and the exclamation mark. Therefore, for punctuation the entire material has been altered with exception to one reading passage where students are to place the punctuation marks

where needed. In the case of full stop there has been an image placed there to indicate what a full stop looks like and this will enable the students to keep in mind visually what a full stop is. As for the full stop is concerned the exercise has been altered to the extent where the “read and say” has been replaced by “listen and read”. What the exercise book offers is exceptionally difficult for students comprehension. Thus ample alteration was needed.

The alterations include changing the phrases as well as sentence structure and the sentences. The full stop has been combined with three other punctuation marks, the question mark, comma and the exclamation mark. Throughout the material there are many opportunities for visual aids and chances for students to create their own pictures. Since this material is being designed for primary level children who are learning English for a second language pictures are in fact imperative in this context.

When comparing the altered material to the original, the new material that has been comprised is far more cohesive. Everything is linked to each other where as the original material is analyzed to be completely obscure and appears to be abrupt in places. In addition, the level of difficulty exceeds far beyond what is expected for students who live in rural areas. Whether it is too complex or unchallenging the government text book exercises fails to provide with assignments that are appropriate for the students that are in target. Thus the alteration of the material has started. The process of alteration will take about several months or so and out of which couple of weeks will be spent piloting the materials so we can get a better understanding of how well the students and teachers are coping with the newer version of the materials.

The teacher's guide which follows alongside with the student copy is far more complicated to design since the teacher's copy has ample amount of things implemented in it to help the teacher conduct her class.

The teacher's copy consists of instructions on how to teach the material, the amount of time the teacher is given for that particular lesson, objectives and more importantly different examples and strategies in teaching each section.

After completion of the material, piloting of the material took place which for most of the time went well. The teacher for most of the time was able to instruct the students in the way the guide suggested her to do so. However, there were a number of problems I faced while observing the piloting of the material, such as the approach and method that was being followed did not do so well and that could have been for the simple fact that indirect way of teaching the language was never practiced by that teacher thus, students did not respond too well to the approach seeing as that it was completely new to them. As a result, they had a tough time following the teacher and her instructions.

The teacher who was only given a short time to view the material and follow the newly given instructions administered the lesson to the best of her abilities. Nevertheless it seems as though ample alteration is needed in the material and the teachers guide.

There were several complaints about my material, and they are as follows; picture not colorful enough, the use of vocabulary too complex and needs to be changed. Sentences were too long for students to keep up with. The question and answer session did not go so well in the beginning, however, after couple of tries students seemed to have understood

the concept of the story and what the moral of the story was. The teacher requested that I change some of the words in the story so it will be easier for her to read the story and also it will enable her to help students understand the story better.

The second half of my observation was spent observing the piloting of the 1st grade English curriculum. With eleven teachers present, two trainers who are to facilitate the material to the teachers again once a month during refresher class if the piloting is successful. The piloting was conducted by 6 curriculum designers, and they all contributed in the training making sure that all the teachers comprehended the material correctly and would teach the material the way it was taught to them during piloting.

Nevertheless it was a success; teachers were able to grasp the material well. This new material will now be practiced in their respected schools while the curriculum designers will spend months visiting the schools and alter the material if and as needed.

Over all the piloting went well, I have learned that I cannot implement approaches that have not been previously followed since it creates difficulty for both the students and the teachers.

2. Designing and renovating some existing materials:

Another lesson that was focused on was “Daily Routine”. The lesson in the government text starts off with a detailed description about a boy and what his daily routine contains. The reading passage contains times and descriptive images that allow students to picture what the context is actually referring too. It then moves on to some questions and answers

which seem to be very abrupt, since it has nothing actually to do with the passage that is read before. After the question and answer task it finally goes to the task where students are expected to answer questions about the passage. Lastly we come to the end of the lesson where a set of new vocabulary words are introduced and a task on

“Look, say and write” is implemented into the lesson. Again there is an abrupt and obscure assignment that has been placed here that ask students to use the words “isn’t” which assuming is preparing them for a task that may require the use of “isn’t” later on; but in this particular passage the use of isn’t is absent therefore making it harder for students to put place the word in a context. Thus in my assumption would make it harder for students to comprehend the use of the word.

Therefore, I have planned out and designed a material that coincides with the text so it will work as reinforcement for the students for the most part. Also I have altered certain parts and omitted a lesson so the tasks are more cohesive with each other.

The lesson that I altered and designed is described below:

Lesson 10

Daily Routine Reeham Chowdhury



A.


Meet Rima! Say hello to Rima! Rima has a hard time waking up in the morning. Every morning at 5 o'clock her mother tries to wake her up. But Rima doesn't wake up. She sleeps till 6 o'clock. When Rima finally wakes up she takes a bath and eats her meal. "It is 7 o'clock Rima go to school!" says Rima's mother. Rima leaves her house and goes to school. Its 8 o'clock and Rima is on time. Ding Dong, Ding Dong It is 1 o'clock time to go home.



So, Rima starts to walk back home. "Hello Luna" says Rima, "hello Rima, its after 1 o'clock you are late for your afternoon meal" "yes, I am. I will run the rest of the way home so my monkey doesn't eat all my food" says Rima. Rima runs home only to find her food was gone, her monkey had eaten it all. Rima was sad and very hungry. "Rima! Go do your school work it is 4 o'clock" says Rima's mother.

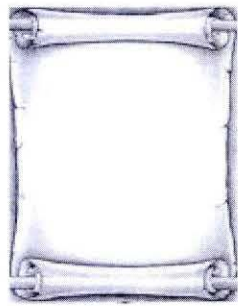
Rima goes to her room and sits with her school work. But today Rima doesn't want to do her school work. Because Rima is hungry and she has to

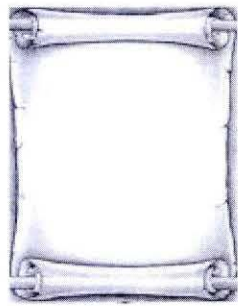


wait till 7 o'clock before she can eat again. Rima  is not very happy today maybe tomorrow she will follow her daily routine correctly.



1. What do you think a daily routine is?



“I think  a daily routine tells us what a person does from the time they wake up till they go to sleep.”

B. Choose from the box below and write down what you want him to do daily. Pick 8 things that you want Rima to do and the time she will do it.

Sleep Go to school Eat breakfast Help father in the field

Eat Lunch Go to the market Study Eat dinner

Play football Go home Go swimming Help mother prepare food

6. O'clock 8. O'clock 10. O'clock 12. O'clock 2. O'clock 4. O'clock

7. O'clock 9. O'clock 11. O'clock 1. O'clock 3. O'clock 5. O'clock

The lessons that I designed consists of a daily routine reading passage. This passage unlike the one provided by the text is about a girl. A girl who seems to not follow her routine as well as she should. Thus, there were certain problems that occurred from her carelessness.

The routine consisted of time and certain things that are followed by most at those particular times. This was done so students can relate and connect the time and tasks together. This was done so students can start to tell time. Since time is a passage that is later introduced in the government text book, but has now been decided to be combined by (BEP) is being introduced in the supplementary material jointly so students can relate to the “Daily routine” and “Time” collectively.

Implementation of time, routine and tasks that involve interaction with other students and teacher has been implemented into the supplementary material. For this particular lesson in the supplementary material students will be able to communicate with each other, use their interpersonal skills and be more creative while completing some of the tasks.

Furthermore, a teacher’s guide has been designed to assist the teacher while teaching the lesson. The guide has implemented detailed description on how and when to teach the supplementary material. Thus, teachers will know when to teach the government text and when to teach the supplementary material. Assuming that it is carried out the way it was intended to be then students will benefit amply. However, certain degree of difficulty will be faced while trying to implement certain methods and strategy in teaching the material. Other obstacles that may come up are time constraint due to following two different texts, inability to convey the lessons of the supplementary text in the way it was intended and adapting to methods that has not been introduced before.

It is highly recommended that a piloting session takes place for this material since I am unaware of the response of the teachers. And due to lack of time on my part I need to

know exactly what alterations are needed if any. This material produced that I have designed is a material that asks for a lot of student to student participation and I am not sure of how able students are at this stage to take on work that

3.3.1 Designing a Material for teaching time perception.

The next task was to design a supplementary material for time telling. Chapter 19 of the government text book teaches how to tell time. Therefore the supplementary material doesn't omit or alter anything but support it with extra lessons that will reinforce what is taught in the text book.

By the end of chapter 19 students are expected to have learned how to tell time. The supplementary material reinforces that and also implements new ways in which learners can grasp the concept of time. Since it is necessary that all speaking, listening, writing and reading in the material I have designed the material to where it meets all of BEP and Government standards.

The material starts off with a short poem about time which is used to open the discussion about time, learners will then move on to learning about how to tell time. There is a brief definition about how to tell time. "The **short hand** shows the **hours**.

The **long hand** shows the **minutes**." And a picture of a short and long hand has been implemented in the material for better understanding. Then I have implemented the use of TPR (Total Physical Response), learners are expected to act as a clock by using their arms to describe the hands of the clock and point at the direction of the time. This is implemented because BEP wants more student interaction rather than just a teacher

oriented classroom. This also encourages students to get up and participate in class and get accustomed to instructions given in English.

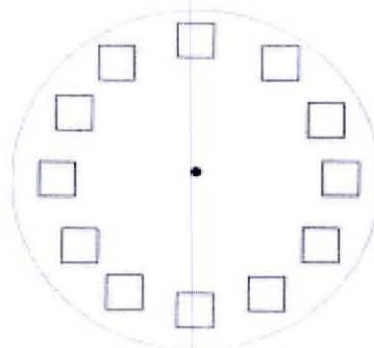
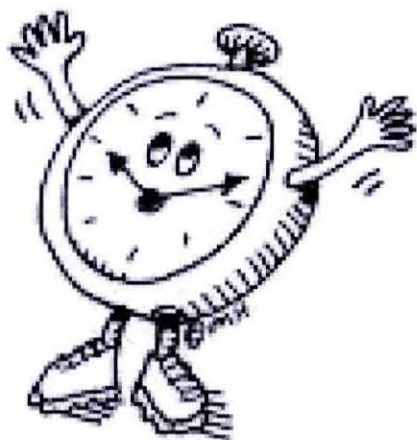
The second part of the lesson focuses on images of clocks. Learners are expected to fill in the time, hands of the clock and situate the clocks in the correct time.

The last part of the lesson is a “case study” students are given a short case study that they are expected to answer on their own. Two options are given to them where they choose one and orally state why they have chosen that particular option. This enables students to use their verbal skills as well as enables each student to be original creative.

Along with this supplementary material a teacher’s guide has been created giving details on how to teach the material which will later be translated in Bangla so teachers are able to understand the instructions easily.

The lesson that I designed is given below:

B. Color ME!



Can you write the numbers on
the clock in the correct order?

10, 2, 3, 6, 5, 4, 8, 7, 9, 11.

3.3.2 Evaluating and designing a lesson on pronunciation

Another step to reorganizing was designing a material on a second chapter of “Pronunciation”. The government text book has implemented 3 chapters that focus on pronunciation all of which are relevant to learners. But supplementary material is needed to make an easier transition for learners. Therefore, out of 3 chapters 2 chapters are going to be supported by the supplementary material.

The second chapter titled “Pronunciation” is just an addition to the first pronunciation chapter that was designed for the supplementary. It consists of fill in the blanks with words that are similar in sounds so students can get a better understanding of words that

may sound alike but they don't have the same meaning nor at times do they have the exact sound.

This is a way that I assume will enable students to learn new vocabulary and sounds of words that are similar to each other.

Next task is a short story with words which are similar in sounds. Words that sound similar are in the same sentence so learner can hear the sounds as he/she reads. Furthermore, pictures were implemented in the story to describe the words better. Images seem to allure learners of this particular age a lot more than just words thus, ample images have been put in for learners' enjoyment.

The last task is a short poem designed by me to reinforce learners' interaction with each other and the teacher as well as to help learner's pronunciation skills that are implemented in the lesson.

3.3.3 Producing supplementary material for existing material

The next lesson that was focused on was "Letter writing". The text book gives an example of an informal letter written to a friend from a friend. It is then facilitated with some tasks that consists of questioning and answering written and orally.

Therefore the supplementary material has been designed to support the text with tasks that are similar to the ones in the text. However, the supplementary material can only support so much. Due to restriction of time the teacher is allowed to teach, I am compelled to shorten my material to two days though the government material takes on

five days. I believe that some of the tasks that are given are not interactive most of the work given in the task is individual work. Thus the supplementary material concentrates on group work so interaction with student and teacher can be present.

The supplementary material starts off with a letter from a girl who is on the Moon to her friend who is on Earth. The letter is short but informative. Students will be able to get a small idea about the Moon and its weather.

Since this is a text designed for the 4th grade rural area children, I am unable to put in too much information that may confuse the students. Therefore, the information about the moon is kept short.

The second part of the material focuses on allowing students to be creative. Students are expected to create their own imaginary place. Images are implemented in the text to support them with their creativity. This is not a teacher centered work therefore students will have to complete this section on their own. The objective is to get an understanding of how far and how much rural students are able to think. If given the chance to be anywhere or see anything where do they picture themselves to be? The aim is to allow these students to be free to express whatever they desire with absolutely no obstruction. Hence, the reason why there is no teacher interaction in this task. There is very little need for facilitation only thing that needs to be facilitated is explaining what the task requires of them. After the students have drawn out a place for themselves they are expected to write a letter to a friend from there describing the place. After the letter has been written students will exchange the letters where the students will translate the letter into Bengali.

The letters will again be exchanged and translated again into English. After completion the letters will go back to the original owners where they owners will evaluate the letters to see how other students have translated their work.

To support this lesson a descriptive teacher's guide is provided informing teachers how to convey the material and the usefulness of some of the tasks.

3.3.4 Evaluating and Designing tasks on Vocabulary.

The focus was on designing a material that would complement the text book lesson. The text book lessons focus was on the topic "Picnic" it concentrated on teaching students new words and as it seems also formation of small sentences. Therefore, the supplementary materials target was to design such a material that would reinforce the text book challenge the minds of the students as well as able them to be creative while forming their sentences.

"The story has been started for you. Can you finish the story?"

Draw your own pictures as you finish the story."

First part of the material was dedicated to letting students explore their creativity while finishing a story that has been started off for them. The story has been detailed with descriptive images that tell the tale that moves on to a halt where to students is supposed to draw their own pictures and write the rest of the story. The target of this activity is to

enable students to be creative and learn sentence structure following the previous sentences.

“Make a list of things that you think should be at a feast.”

The second part of the activity starts off with a discussion of the meaning of “feast” the teacher will in detail discussion about what a feast is and what can be expected at a feast.

Students will then make a list of what they think should be at a feast. This activity also reinforces the discussion they had prior to the activity about a feast. This activity should give the students some schematic knowledge and use the schematic knowledge while completing the rest of the task.

“Tomorrow is the day that your town is planning on having a BiG Feast!

Can you write out a plan for you town to follow?”

The third and last part of the task is for students to plan out a towns feast. Students are encouraged to discuss among a group of the peers and come up with plan for their town.

E.g. who should be invited, what food is to be bought ...etc.

The lesson has been implemented with ample pictures for students' enjoyment and more so because the text book lack images that are children friendly.

Lastly the teachers guide has been also created to substitute the teacher with the lesson with detailed description of how to teach the lesson. Meanings of words and definition have also been given along with the timings.

There will be a number of problems that the teacher is going the face and that is the level of difficulty of the lesson, students may not be up to par with the context and task that is given in the lesson. However, this problem has been put under consideration and assumed that tasks that challenge the students are better than one that is far too easy for them. The target is for these rural area students to excel in the English language as much as possible. Therefore, the lesson will remain to be as complicated if and until the piloting says otherwise .The result of the piloting is a vital factor because if students and teachers are unable to comprehend the task then the outputr becomes zero.

It is assumed that ample mistakes will be made but that is how students will learn, making errors while doing this particular or any task is a part of learning.

So as long as the students are able to complete part of the task successfully then the lesson has done its job.

3.3.5 Piloting a portion of supplementary material

Our next task was on the piloting of the “Letter Writing” material.

The piloting took place in Manikgonj several miles outside of Dhaka City in a fourth grade class. The material was distributed to the students to view and the teacher was briefed on the pedagogy of the activity.

The material that we thought needed to be piloted was the portion on translation. Since there were some uncertainty on how the students would perform and if there were enough time to actually complete this task on time.

The items that were tested in the piloting are:

Validity of time

Comprehension of students

Difficulty level of the activity

Teachers’ ability to teach the activity

This entire piloting went well seeing as we came back knowing that the students do not have much of a vocabulary to actually form sentences yet.

They have certain sentence format memorized and therefore used that to construct the letter they were asked to write.

The translation process the students went through did not go as well as predicted.

Overall the piloting suggested that the entire portion translating should be omitted since students are not yet capable in doing so.

Therefore the activity was changed to asking students to write the letter to the best of their abilities and exchange the letters with another student to have the letter read.

If this activity is to be successful there has to be a curriculum that will teach the students more vocabulary as well as simple sentences.



A. The Football Game

Kamal, Ruma and Runa love to play football every afternoon. Ruma and

Runa are very good players but Kamal **isn't** as good as them. Ruma and Runa are trying to help Kamal learn how to play the game. The first thing they teach Kamal is how to kick the ball. "Kamal, it **isn't** very hard to kick the ball!" said Runa. "**Aren't** you having fun?" asked Ruma. "Yes I am having fun" said Kamal. – *This story is not finished.*

Can you give this story an ending?

Recommendations

After piloting my materials I discovered that the materials will not work in the BRAC primary schools due to a number of factors. The materials seemed to have been too complex for students and teachers to grasp therefore, they did not work they were intended to.

The complications that were faced during the designing of these lessons were the lack of knowledge of how the students and teachers would be able to grasp the materials. Because of time constraint and minimal visits to the schools there was a lack of awareness on how the lessons would actually affect the students. After two visits to the field and having piloting a chapter from the supplementary material it proved that the materials were far too complicated and that the materials were designed to teach students

with a broader vocabulary base as well as a broader understanding for the language alone.

While designing this material, I have faced ample amount of problems, such as not knowing how to or what kind of pedagogy should be used in order to teach this material. It has not been easy to design this material due to certain constraints since our target learners are rural area learners and therefore, certain elements of language that would be taught in most classes were not able to be conveyed here. Picking the right words that are relevant and words that can be pronounced by the facilitator as correctly as possible was implemented.

The materials that are being used currently in the BRAC primary schools concentrate more on the Grammar Translation Method; hence there is little need for students to actual work on their own. Everything is recited by the teacher and students repeat as though go and memorize the lessons.

Nevertheless, the material had to be created and therefore, two lessons were designed as well as a teacher's guide to support the material.

Since, the supplementary materials were more focused on more interactive work rather than drills or even translation by the teacher the students faced problems with the lessons.

Students' comprehension level in the English language is abysmal. Students seemed to have memorized sentences therefore when asked to write their own sentence they were unable to do so. That shows that students were not competent in the English language and so faces difficulty when attempting to do tasks that ask for their own ideas and creativity.

My recommendations are if these supplementary materials are to be used in the BRAC primary schools, alterations need to be made in the curriculum for grade one. The foundation needs to be changed and new methods need to use in order to change the current method of learning.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the materials designed for the fourth grade English text book was quite compelling since there were certain approaches that had to be implemented in the supplementary materials. What made it so compelling is the fact that no matter what had been designed once piloted it was seen that the supplementary materials failed to reach out to the students' comprehension level. The supplementary materials were too hard for students comprehension therefore failed to pass on. New materials had to be designed to fit the students' needs but it does not fully stratify the needs of the actual reason for creating the supplementary material as it does not test students' knowledge and understanding as well as the previous materials would have if it has passed the piloting phase.

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